

North Myrtle
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Aging Issues and Answers 135

Office answers seniors questions

Question: Is it true that the State Office on Aging provides rental assistance for seniors on fixed incomes who do not own their homes?

Answer: The answer is yes – If an older person who rents is having a financial emergency that could lead to them being evicted for unpaid rent, we have a program that may be able to help.

The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging was awarded a grant from the South Carolina Housing and Development Authority to administer an emergency rental assistance program throughout the state for persons age 60 and older who are at 120 percent of the federal poverty level or below.

Funding for the emergency rental assistance program is limited. Assistance is given on a first-come, first-served basis. All applicants must complete an application and provide proper documentation and identification. To apply, contact Jennifer Hall in the Lieu-



André Bauer

tenant Governor's Office on Aging in Columbia at 1-800-868-9095 or (803) 734-9901 (Columbia local calling area).

In addition to getting help with their rent if they meet the program's guidelines, individuals who call in may also be referred to an information referral and assistance specialist in their region. The IR&A Specialists will try to determine why a senior is having difficulty paying his or her rent and other expenses and can provide information and counseling about other sources of help or support available for them.

The goal of the emergency rental assistance program is to meet the immediate need for shelter and also provide long term stability for the senior. The following are guidelines for the program:

Assistance will be given to eligible persons 60 years of age and older; eligible households may have an income of 120 percent of the poverty level; applicant must be on the lease; property manager/landlord information must be supplied on the application; eligible households can receive three month's rent up to a maximum of \$1,000; and payments are made directly to the landlord.

Aging Issues and Answers is a series of bi-monthly columns answering common questions posed to staff in the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging. Contact them at 1-800-868-0995 or via e-mail at askus@aging.sc.gov. Your question may appear in a future edition of Aging Issues and Answers.